

Prepared Testimony of Mr. Samson Keahna  
On Behalf of the Sac and Fox Tribe of the Mississippi in Iowa  
In Support of S. 540 "The Code Talkers Recognition Act"  
To the Senate Indian Affairs Committee  
Wednesday, September 22, 2004

Mr. Chairman:

On behalf of the Meskwaki Nation, thank you for the opportunity to appear today. It is an honor for me to speak in support of the Meskwaki Code Talkers and those from other tribes, who gave generously of their time and risked their lives on behalf of this country. The story of the Code Talkers and the important role they played in our military is well documented so I will be brief in my remarks.

Until 1968, information related to the Code Talkers activities during both World War I and World War II remained classified by the Department of Defense. Bound by their honor and obligation, the Code Talkers said nothing about the essential role they played on behalf of our country. Instead, they lived humbly among us as friends, brothers, uncles, fathers and grandfathers.

In 2000, Congress passed legislation to award gold medals to 29 members of the Navajo tribe who served as Code Talkers. This measure was an excellent first step in recognizing men who served their country bravely. But it was only one step and more work remains to be done to ensure that we honor all of these worthy individuals. We must provide Code Talkers from the remaining 18 tribes the same recognition the Navajo deserved. We must pass The Code Talkers Recognition Act now.

The Code Talkers deserve to be awarded for their bravery, and for aiding their comrades to help gain in the victory over their adversaries, with countless forays against heavy odds. With their ingenuity, these Brave Warriors enabled our military and that of our allies to secure our nation's freedom and security. In turn, our tribe has used those

freedoms to cultivate our culture, our history, and above all, our unique Meskwaki Language. As such, we continue to contribute to the rich diversity that befits our great nation.

Time is of the essence. Already we have lost too many of these great warriors. Each of the men who served as a Code Talker deserves to know that the nation they served honors their sacrifices. For those whom we have lost, we must demonstrate to their families that they have not been forgotten.

I would hope that your committee will grant these Brave Warriors the commendations that they have deserved for more than 60+ years.

May the Great Spirit be with you in your decision. Thank you.

Samson Keahna  
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